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ABSTRACT

A practicum was designed to increase the utilization of an elementary school media center whose wealth of materials were seldom checked out or used, and whose facilities were used mostly for fixed library scheduled classes. Moreover, the media center's facilities were unattractive and uninviting to visit. The solution strategies involved organizing the media collection and printing an audio-visual handbook so that parents and teachers would know what was available in the media collection and utilize the materials. The media center's facilities were attractively decorated with seasonal displays and books. Sofas and chairs were added to make the media center more enticing to visit, browse, and read. Teacher inservices were held. Parents, teachers and significant others were encouraged to model a love for reading and read alouds to children daily. Reading incentive programs were utilized to encourage students to develop positive reading habits. As a result of the practicum, students visited the media center and devoured the printed word. The love and joy of reading was brought to young minds. Children checked out and read more books. Teachers became effective media center users. Parents visited the media center to check out books to read to children. What was once a dull, unattractive library space became alive as an attractive service agent. (Contains 17 references and two tables of data; appendixes present forms to record student information, interview schedules, and survey data.) (Author/RS)

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ED 369 037

Using Organizational Strategies and Parent-Student-Teacher Involvement to Increase Utilization of an Elementary School Media Center

by

Deloris McKnight

Cluster 41

A Practicum II Report presented to
Ed.D Program in Early and Middle Childhood
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

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This practicum report was submitted by Deloris H. McKnight under the direction of the adviser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova University.

Approved:

Feb. 19, 1994

Date of Final Approval of Report

William W. Anderson

William W. Anderson, Ed.D., Adviser

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The practicum is dedicated to my loving and patient husband Richard and my three adorable sons, Richie, Jonathan, and Reggie, for their understanding and sacrifice during the time of my continuing educational growth.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT		iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS		iv
LIST OF TABLES		v
Chapter		
I	INTRODUCTION	1
	Description of Work Setting and Community	1
	Writer's Work Setting and Role	2
II	STUDY OF THE PROBLEM	4
	Problem Description	4
	Problem Documentation	4
	Causative Analysis	7
	Relationship of the Problem to the Literature	10
III	ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS	15
	Goals and Expectations	15
	Expected Outcomes	15
	Measurement of Outcomes	16
IV	SOLUTION STRATEGY	21
	Discussion and Evaluation of Possible Solutions	21
	Description of Selected Solution	23
	Report of Action Taken	26
V	RESULTS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	38
	Results	38
	Discussion	42
	Recommendations	48
	Dissemination Plans	48
REFERENCES		49

Appendices

A	Daily Circulation Record.....	53
B	Monthly Log of Media Center Activities.....	55
C	Teacher Request Forms.....	57
D	Reading Interview Questions.....	59
E	Teacher Interview/Media Center's Appearance...	61
F	Teacher Survey/Media Center Materials.....	63
G	Parent Interview/Student TV Watching Time.....	65
H	Results of Outcome Summary Chart.....	67

LIST OF TABLES

Table		
1	Summary Results of Book Circulation Record....	6
2	Summary of TV Interview Questions.....	8

ABSTRACT

Using Organizational Strategies and Parent-Student-Teacher Involvement to Increase Utilization of an Elementary School Media Center. McKnight, Deloris H., 1993: Practicum Report, Nova University, Ed.D., Program in Early and Middle Childhood. Descriptors: Media Center Usage/Media Center Management/Reading Attitudes/Elementary School and the Media Center/Elementary Teachers and the Media Center/Leisure Time Reading/Reading Incentive Programs TV Viewing and Reading/

This practicum was designed to increase the utilization of an elementary school media center. This center's collection had a wealth of materials which were seldom checked out or used, and its facilities were used mostly for fixed library scheduled classes. Moreover, the media center's facilities were unattractive and uninviting to visit.

The solution strategies involved organizing the media collection and printing an audio-visual handbook so that parents and teachers would know what was available in the media collection and utilize the materials. The media center's facilities were attractively decorated with seasonal displays and books. Sofas and chairs were added to make the media center more enticing to visit, browse and read. Teacher inservices were held. Parents, teachers and significant others were encouraged to model a love for reading and read aloud to children daily. Reading incentive programs were utilized to encourage students to develop positive reading habits.

As a result of this practicum, students visited the media center and devoured the printed word. The love and joy of reading was brought to young minds. Children checked out and read more books. Teachers became effective media center users. Parents visited the media center to check out books to read to children. What was once a dull, unattractive library space became alive as an attractive service agent.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Work Setting and Community

The work setting for the writer was a small primary school with an enrollment of 70 students. The population involved in this practicum study was 70 four year olds, first grade and second grade students, four regular teachers, and four itinerant teachers.

The school was one of 16 elementary schools located in the school district. Out of the 70 students enrolled, the ethnic backgrounds were three white, one multiracial, and 64 black. The school district was comprised of more white students; however, they attended private schools.

The setting was a small rural community located in the deep south. There was one textile factory which provided employment for the work force. A sluggish economy caused many residents to be laid off. A section of the factory closed down resulting in permanent unemployment for many.

Farming and share cropping were the next major sources of work. The community population consisted mostly of lower socio-economic citizens. Forty percent of the parents held blue collar or farming jobs, 4% held white collar or office jobs, 54% were unemployed or received some type of government assistance, and the economic statuses were unknown for 2%.

The community was moderately supportive of the school. For example, they would help raise money for supplementary financial support; however, parents seldom came out for teacher conferences and other school activities.

The "Association of Parents and Teachers" (APT) became more actively involved during the school year and helped to sponsor activities that helped to provide supplementary funds to purchase materials for the children.

Parents' visits were usually limited to when children received overnight suspension and a parent had to sign them back into school.

Over half the households were headed by single parents. About 20% of the parents completed high school. Drug and alcohol abuse were very common. Many children complained of physical abuse directed toward them or the female caretaker in the house. The boyfriend was often identified as the abuser.

Writer's Work Setting and Role

The writer served as librarian and guidance counselor in her work setting. The writer's educational background included earning a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Social Studies, a Master of Education degree in Education, and an Educational Specialist degree with a

concentration in administration and guidance. The writer's work experiences included serving as an elementary and secondary social studies teacher, holding positions of media specialist on the elementary and middle school level, and serving as guidance counselor on the elementary level, which totaled 27 years in the public school system. The writer was actively involved in professional organizations and held membership in the SCEA (South Carolina Educational Association), NEA (National Educational Association), and Florence County Education Association. The writer also held membership in the South Carolina Association of School Librarians and the South Carolina Association of School Counselors.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

The media center's collection had a wealth of materials which were seldom checked out or used. The media center's facilities were used mostly for fixed library scheduled classes. The media center resources were not being effectively utilized by students, parents, and teachers. For the purpose of this practicum, the phrase "effectively utilized" would be defined to be a circumstance in which all the outcomes below had been achieved. Forty out of 70 students would visit the media center two or more times weekly to check out books and read. Five teachers would use the media center at least once per month for enrichment activities. Four teachers would request supplementary materials once per month. An average of 525 books would be checked out monthly. Fifteen parents would visit the media center and check out books within the next eight months.

Evidence of this problem was supported by an analysis of the circulation records, daily log of media center's activities, a review of teacher request forms, and student interviews.

1. During the fall of 1992, the circulation records revealed that for two months the number of books

checked out by students was low, averaging one book per child per week. (see Table 1)

2. A monthly log of the media center's activities for two months showed that four teachers came to the media center to bring children for regularly scheduled periods; only one teacher spent additional time for class activities.
3. A review of "Teacher Request Forms" revealed only one out of eight teachers requested supplementary materials for two months during the fall of 1992.
4. During the fall of 1992, 60 children out of 70 responded negatively when asked if their parents ever used media center books to read with them or to listen to them read.
5. During the fall of 1992, an interview with teachers showed that eight out of eight teachers rated the media center unattractive and uninviting to visit and use.
6. During the fall of 1992, a survey revealed that eight out of eight teachers were unfamiliar with the book collection, audio-visual aides, and other supplementary materials available in his/her subject area.

TABLE 1

Summary Results of Book Circulation Record

Grade	Number of Books Checked Out		Total Books Checked Out
	Fiction	Non-fiction	
4 years old Teacher A (20)	20	0	20
1st Grade Teacher B (20)	16	4	20
2nd Grade Teacher C (15)	12	3	15
Teacher D (15)	14	1	15
Total	62	8	70

Comments: Students came once per week to check out at least one book per child.

7. An interview with parents revealed 60 out of 70 spent at least two hours or more per day watching commercial TV compared to 15 minutes or less spent doing leisure reading. (see Table 2)

Causative Analysis

It is the writer's belief that there were four causes for the problem.

Teachers were not aware of the vast collection and abundant supplementary resources available in the media center. In many instances, media center's resources had become dust collectors.

Teachers viewed the media specialist's job as a keeper of books and children rather than a professional position requiring knowledge, skills, and abilities. They did not view the media specialist's position as one they could consult for valuable services. When teachers came into the media center and saw the media specialist doing routine chores, such as checking books in and out, mental pictures of the job were printed on their minds that it does not take special training or skills to do that job.

A deeper reconnoiter of the media specialist's job description revealed that it involved being a planner and making important decisions; for example, how to manage the

TABLE 2

Summary of TV Interview Questions

	Yes	No	Don't Remember	Total
1. Did your child watch TV today?	60	4	6	70
2. Did your child watch four or more programs averaging 30 minutes each?	60	4	6	70
3. Did someone read to your child today? (Average reading time was found to be 30 minutes or less.)	20	48	2	70

budget to purchase material that will be most beneficial to the patrons using the media center. A media specialist must also be knowledgeable to answer the mountains of questions frequently asked by the patrons.

The library facilities were unattractive and uninviting to the teachers, students, and parents. Many times the media center's walls were lined with rows of book shelves full of outdated books. The displays and art work were limited to store purchased commercial pieces. Stuffed animals and puppets were not present in the media center. The stuffed animals and puppets would have drawn children and others into the media center to explore more.

Some of the book collection copyright dates were fairly recent; however, the collection did not contain books children were interested in reading. Caldecott books were the children's favorites as they seemed to enjoy the beautiful illustrations as well as the story text.

Students did not have the freedom and flexibility to visit the Media Center as needs and interests arose. The current state mandated curriculum and time constraints allowed minimal time for the classroom teacher to allow students the freedom to leave the classroom to browse and explore the media center.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

Review of the literature gave evidence that the elementary school media center was a vital part of the school and should be integrated into the total educational program.

Vandergrift and Hannigan (1986) stress that a child's social, emotional, intellectual, and aesthetical development is influenced by the programs and services provided by the media center.

Miller (1987) reports on research which supports the need for good school libraries for all children. The influential elements are a pleasant, friendly librarian, quality materials and equipment, special fun activities and privileges, good conduct of the pupil in the media center, a pleasant atmosphere in the media center, pupils' positive influence on friends to use the facilities, and the library as an entity that is information based.

Studies have been made which examine different elementary school library services and the impact related to the educational achievement of children in elementary grades. Didier (1982) reports on a study involving fourth and seventh grade students in 94 school districts in Michigan. The students who were enrolled in schools with competent library personnel and who had access to the

media center scored significantly higher on a statewide objective reference test than those without them.

Loertscher (1986) discussed results of a study of 290 public and private schools which were labeled "exemplary." In all the schools earning the honor, the media specialist had encouraged and challenged children to explore the enchanting world of reading.

Literature reveals several causes for the problem. Some school media specialists continue to be little more than "babysitters." Trelease (1983) points out school policies persist in allowing teachers and administrators to use the facilities as a holding station, a type of "Siberia" to extradite students who are causing chaos in the classroom.

Binkley (1989) stresses an effective school principal monitors the teachers and media specialist and insists that school media policies and procedures be followed.

Marchant and Broadway (1984) discuss the expatiation of the media center in the mid 1960's when federal funding was earmarked specifically for library services; there was a birth of new libraries especially in the elementary schools where none had existed before. However, in the late 70's and 80's when there was a reduction in funds, the library staff and acquisitions funds were radically

trimmed, and students scored lower on academic achievement tests.

Curran (1987) cites that the job of a librarian may be seen as a "wimpy" occupation, plagued with the redundant task of checking books in and out, a job which requires few skills or knowledge. Fisher (1988) points out the American Library Association code of ethics is decrepit and offers little substance in stating to the world the primary focus of the way library work is conducted and the fact that it is performed in a way that can honestly be called professional.

Children often do not see a need to use the media center to check out books to read. Dionisio (1989) reports that to many children reading has no meaning or purpose; it is like an empty pocket. Their pockets are still empty after years of drills and meaningless reading lessons. These children find it difficult to make sense of reading or to enjoy it.

Parents frequently do not realize the impact they make on their children's minds. Thus, they often use their time in activities other than visiting the school media center to check out books or explore the other resources. Anderson (1983) discussed the importance of the parents' role in the child's continued reading growth;

he urged parents to continue to read and discuss stories with their children.

Trelease (1984) reports the TV distraction in the home environment is eminent. Instead of parents demonstrating positive attitudes toward reading, they often use TV as a babysitter. Children spend more time in front of the TV than interacting with parents or teachers (Trelease, 1984).

Ramondetta (1993) discussed how computers in the media center may have a prolific influence on students' interaction with literature. Students often do not have the intrinsic motivation to read. They often require extrinsic motivation. Computers may be utilized to generate interest and produce endless projects which may add to the enjoyment of reading. Ramondetta (1993) further stressed children's imagination will be captured due to a potpourri of rich activities. The software providing these activities may include graphics such as super heroes and aliens as well as software which offers children opportunities to publish their personal big and little books.

Nickel (1984) points out it would be impossible for a media specialist to operate in a vacuum. In order to be a paragon leader and capable of sharing ideals with others,

it is essential to keep abreast of current trends and technological advancements and attend professional meetings.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goals and Expectations

"The following goals and expected outcomes were projected for this practicum."

By the end of the implementation period, the writer planned to have initiated and maintained better quality library service. Effective utilization would have occurred when the following outcomes have been achieved.

Expected Outcomes

Some of the changes expected are as follows:

1. A daily circulation record will reveal 40 students out of 70 will check out an average of two books weekly. (see Appendix A)
2. A monthly log of media center activities will reveal five out of eight teachers will use the media center at least once per month for enrichment activities. (see Appendix B)
3. A review of teacher request forms will reveal that four out of eight teachers will request supplementary materials once per month. (see Appendix C)
4. Forty out of 70 children will respond positively when asked if their parents or designated others ever used

media center books to read to them or to listen to them read. (see Appendix D)

5. Six out of eight teachers will respond positively to interview questions when rating the appearance of the media center. (see Appendix E)
6. A survey will indicate six out of eight teachers are familiar with the media center's holdings in his/her subject area and other curriculum areas. (see Appendix F)
7. An interview with parents will reveal 30 out of 70 students reduced TV watching time from two or more hours to one hour daily and increased reading time to 30 minutes or more daily. (see Appendix G)

Measurement of Outcomes

1. The instrument to ascertain the average number of books checked out weekly by the students was to be a daily circulation record sheet. The circulation record consisted of four columns. The first column indicated the grade and had a space for Teacher A, B, C, and D. The second column provided space to record the number of fiction books checked out; the third column provided space to record the number of non-fiction books checked out. The fourth column was to be used to tally the total number of books checked

out. The writer concluded this instrument was not inclusive enough to determine individual student's average check-out record; therefore, an additional supplementary form was developed. Each student's name was listed parallel in alphabetical order. Five columns were drawn vertically across the sheet. The date of the week was listed as a student checked out books. A tally was made adjacent to his/her name under the date. A check-out count was made daily and recorded on the original daily circulation record.

2. A weekly log of media center activities was to be documented daily by the writer. A line was provided to write the date each daily log was tallied and recorded on a monthly log. The heading on the top of the page was Enrichment Activities. A column for the teacher's name was provided. There were also columns labeled special skills lessons, browse at books, view audio-visuals, special research, and any other activity. As teachers and classes engaged in a specific activity, the date, time, and activity was documented. On the bottom of the page, space was provided for comments. The comments were to be reviewed and referred to when planning enrichment activities. The monthly log was identical to the

daily log. The line for date was to be used to record the month.

3. A form for teachers to request materials was to be used. Teachers were to be instructed to fill out a request form when requesting materials. A line was to be provided for the teacher to write her/his name. A line was provided to write the title of the unit. Materials listed were as follows: books, vertical file current periodicals, reference books, VHS tapes, filmstrips, study prints, and other additional information available. A line was provided beside each material for the teacher to check if it was feasible and if he/she would like to check it out. Space was also provided to write the date the materials were needed. A special space was provided at the bottom to help the writer keep up with the circulation record.
4. The student interview questions about reading were very brief. A simple "yes" or "no" response was to be given. Each question was followed by a request to please give the reason why. The "why" response could have lead into open-ended discussions.
5. The teacher interview questions related to the media center's appearance and environment were given considerable thought when being compiled. Teachers

were asked to rate the appearance with one of three ratings, which were: exceeds expectations, meets expectations, or does not meet expectations. A please comment statement was also included.

6. The teacher survey on the media center's material was provided to give teachers an opportunity to express how knowledgeable they were about the media center's collection. A rating scale was as follows: (1) very familiar, (2) familiar, or (3) unaware. This instrument was prepared to challenge teachers to become aware of the vast collection of resources in the media center.

7. A student's TV watching time survey was administered to parents upon completion of the project. The survey contained a line for the student's name and the teacher's name. Eight questions were listed. These questions were related to students' reading habits and TV watching habits. The possible responses were yes, sometimes, and no. Two questions relating to the amount of time students watched TV were included on the survey. Parents were instructed to circle the response most closely related to their child's reading time or fill in a time not listed. The survey was simple and non-threatening. The

survey would have taken approximately 12 minutes to complete.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

The media center's resources were not being effectively utilized by students, parents, and teachers. For the purpose of this practicum, "effectively utilized" would be used to mean that more books, audio-visual aides, and other media center materials would be checked out and used by students, parents, and teachers. Teachers would make assignments and accompany students to the media center for enrichment activities. Students would be allowed flexible time to read, browse, and check out materials based on special interests and needs.

Solutions suggested by the literature included research from many researchers and practitioners. Barron (1987) states that user services may be either passive or active. Passive means the media specialist is like a keeper of books, overseeing a warehouse, and just waiting for someone to come in. An active service would involve the media specialist actively seeking out media patrons, finding out what they want or need, assisting in locating the materials, and finally helping people to use them.

Barron (1987) further states that the elementary media program should be an integral part of the school

curriculum. Flexibility should be built into the media program, and classes should not be scheduled for the convenience of giving teachers a break.

Finks (1991) stresses that librarians should consider adopting a new code of ethics which will be more useful than the ALA's inadequate code of ethics, which he considers either useless or unenforceable.

The position statement as issued by the American Association of School Librarians (1991) emphasizes that students, teachers, and library media specialists should become partners in learning with the Library Media Center program being fully integrated in the instructional program.

Coleman and Turner (1986) incite school media specialists need to take an assiduous role in working with administrators and other school designees to develop an evaluation instrument which would adequately assess the media specialist's performance. Current trends prior to 1986 used the same instrument to evaluate media specialists that was used to evaluate teachers.

Children tend to be more alert and attentive when read to if they have been exposed to a rich variety of experiences. Surely children who have interacted with the written word when entering school have an advantage over

their less exposed counterparts who have had limited to null experiences.

Description of Selected Solution

All the solutions discussed and combined would by no means be considered a panacea to motivate teachers, students, and parents to utilize the media center. However, when each solution strategy was considered individually, each has some merit.

In the writer's work setting, a variety of solutions were emphasized. Teachers were encouraged to visit the media center and display class projects. Parents were encouraged to become actively involved in their children's reading experiences. Parents were invited to visit the media center. The writer held parenting classes with the parents to assist them in working with their children.

A variety of strategies and activities were utilized to work with the children to encourage more reading. The following were strategies employed by the writer during the search process.

Children roleplayed parts of interesting stories. An afternoon read-a-thon was held, and prizes were given to the winner. Children were encouraged to participate in the WPDE-TV Channel 15 reading program. Children were encouraged to become junior authors by writing a

mini-book. Children were invited to dress up like a book character one day. Students were encouraged to keep documented records of their reading progress. A mini computer workshop was held for the children to elaborate on the electronic book shelf. A student handbook was compiled. The writer spent time weekly reading aloud to children. The book collection was inventoried, and a list of the Caldecott books was compiled. Outdated books were weeded out. The circulation log was restructured. Teacher input was reviewed. Teacher request forms were redesigned. Materials were inventoried and classified according to curriculum design. The writer contacted public relations people to discuss the WPDE-TV Channel 15 reading incentive program. The writer collaborated with the principal regarding the practicum program. Teachers were invited to a drop-in in the media center to discuss the media program. The principal, teachers, and parents were encouraged to read aloud or listen to the children read aloud. The writer attended a three-day International Reading Association (IRA) conference for the purpose of gaining skills in promoting reading.

As stated, in the writer's work setting, a variety of solutions were emphasized. Parents were invited to become partners with the schools to encourage reading achievement

and good reading habits. Children were provided with a variety of learning experiences which would involve interacting with the printed word; these included activities such as writing a short story and role playing the parts.

It is important to devise schemes and strategies to motivate students to replace negative reading attitudes with positive attitudes. Positive reinforcement was utilized with the children. Incentives to read were given to the children. Children were encouraged to participate in book reading contests. As the children engaged in reading activities, the writer offered reading guidance and served somewhat like a ship captain to navigate the children into a broader horizon of reading adventure. The writer worked closely with the language arts teachers. Surveys, questionnaires, and interviews were conducted under the leadership of the writer.

The principal of the school was consulted for permission to conduct the practicum. The electronic reader books were available in the school media center. The writer consulted the teachers, and they pledged to assist in encouraging children and parents to read more.

Report of Action Taken

Embarking upon the implementation phase of the practicum was a delectable challenge for the writer. The writer consulted the principal concerning the commencing of the implementation. The teachers and students were briefed about the practicum and told various learning and fun activities would be synthesized by the writer. Having gained the approval of the principal and the support of the faculty, the writer commenced the implementation. The next several pages will detail a report of action taken as well as difficulties encountered.

Month I

The writer kept a daily tally of the daily circulation record, the media center activities log, and the teacher request forms.

The writer held a teacher inservice for the purpose of educating teachers about the media center. During a round table discussion, it became apparent some teachers did not understand the job description of a media specialist and felt their main duties were to keep library classes. The superintendent of instruction distributed written correspondence indicating her support for flexible library scheduling.

Some of the teachers came to the inservice with a personal agenda, and that was to vocalize their opposition to not having their students scheduled to come to the media center. The writer employed diplomatic skills in a perspicacious manner by reassuring teachers that because of the small school enrollment classes could continue to come as scheduled.

Teachers were willing to negotiate, listen, and give input into some of the practice which they felt would help to make the media center more effective. With the schedule agreed upon, the teachers pledged their support to encourage students to read more and to schedule time to bring the class for enrichment activities.

The writer held two parenting classes to inform parents of the importance of reading to their children. Seventeen parents attended the workshop. The writer guided the parents in agile discussion on the importance of children reading. Suggestions were given and discussed on how to help children read more and enjoy reading. The reading incentive program was also explained to parents.

All students were invited to the media center and the reading incentive program was explained. Students who read a given number of books would be eligible to receive a treat from the gift barrel.

The writer employed the strategy of offering immediate reinforcement to encourage the students to continue to read. An edible treat, such as a candy sucker, bubble gum, chewing gum, and a bunch of grapes or a small box of raisins, was given to each child for reading up to four books. Incentives were divided into five categories. Category one included book marks and various stickers. Category two prizes were commercial and personalized certificates congratulating students for the accomplishment of reading ten books. Reading watches were the treats for mastering category three. Students mastering category four were given the opportunity to select gifts from a toy chest, which included plastic combs, toys, whistles, small books, jump ropes, rings, etc. Category five treats were certificates to get a free pizza. Students could master category one by reading five books, category two by reading ten books, category three by reading fifteen books, category four by reading twenty books, and category five by reading twenty-five books.

The electronic bookshelf program was explained to the students. Electronic bookshelf books were identified in the shelf by attaching special labels to the spine. Students began checking these books out to read. Later in the month, students began taking electronic bookshelf

tests. An end of the month popcorn party was given to students who had successfully passed the test for four electronic bookshelf books.

Students were given pre-interview questions about whether their parents ever read to them or ever listened to them read.

The writer began organizing the audio-visual aides materials for the purpose of compiling an audio-visual guide. Prior to the project, audio-visuals were housed in the media center in no particular order. Teachers would come to the media center and search through the boxes or ask the librarian to look up a particular item or do without. Experience proved most of the time they did without. One teacher explained it was too much trouble to search through so many boxes and probably not find what she was looking for. She said, "It's like looking for a needle in a haystack."

Students and teachers decided on a daily log form. The form was very simple. At the top of the form was a space for the student's name. Immediately following the name was a preface sentence written in bold capital letters: **I LOVE TO READ AND I CAN PROVE IT.** Immediately following was a column for the date, title of the book, author, pages read, and signature or initial of the person

who could verify the student had read the book. The verifier could be a parent, older brother or sister, teacher, staff member, librarian, or any responsible older person. It became apparent a daily log required adult supervision, so the first grade teacher and the writer collaborated. The teacher volunteered to assist and help the students in recording books on the daily log sheet. Letters explaining the importance of students keeping a daily log were sent to parents. A few parents responded and assisted the students in keeping a daily log.

A popcorn party was held for the class checking out the most books. This party generated competitive excitement and interest among the other classes, and book circulation increased.

Teachers filled out the pre-teacher's media center appearance and environment questionnaire.

Arrangements were made with the teacher, and the writer's schedule and the class schedule was correlated, thus allowing planning time for the student to discuss with the writer materials read. During regular scheduled 45-minute library time, at least 15 or 20 minutes were set aside weekly for students to discuss their reading.

Month II

The writer kept a daily tally of the daily circulation record, the media center's activities log, and the teacher request forms.

Students roleplayed parts of interesting stories. Students were very creative when roleplaying. Some of the stories acted out were: "The Three Bears", "The Ugly Duckling", and "The Three Billy Goats Gruff". "The Three Billy Goats Gruff" generated the most excitement. Students told of being bullied by an older bigger child and being afraid. The class cheered when the goat stood up to the ugly troll.

Letters were sent home and telephone calls made to encourage parents to continue to read aloud to their children, to listen to the child read, and to discuss what was read.

A summer reading list and a list of books to be used with the electronic bookshelf were distributed to the students. Students continued to keep a log with the assistance of some parents, the writer, and the first grade teacher.

"Sammie the Worm" enticed the students to read more as he grew along the walls of the media center. Sammie was a segmented worm, and every time a book was read by a

child a segment part was added. Students' progress was visually shown.

Seasonal books were placed on reserve so they would be available to students, parents, and teachers. Students took electronic bookshelf tests and received prizes for points earned.

During the weeks the students were out of school in June for summer vacation, the writer serviced students with books on wheels. Books were carried to the local church during Vacation Bible School and during the hot lunch summer program.

Month III

The writer continued to service students with books on wheels. Students continued to keep reading records. The writer reviewed the reading log when books on wheels were carried to the children. Incentives from the toy chest were given to encourage students to read and keep reading logs.

The writer held a summer reading program with the students at the local church. During this time, the writer read to students, the students read aloud, the older students read to the younger students, and various books were discussed.

Students participated in a read-a-thon at the local church. Reading materials from various subjects and on various reading levels were made available for the students to read. The younger children's attention span was shorter, and they were the first to become restless. Reading goals were set by students, and many of them reached their goal and exceeded it by reading more books than predicted. Students expressed enjoying this activity and requested to do it again. The writer began and completed a student handbook. The handbook was completed during this time so it could be issued and discussed with the students when they returned to school in August.

The writer also contemplated giving the media center a face lift. Salvage shops, thrift stores, and yard sales were visited with the hopes of retrieving sofas, chairs, or some other needed items to give excitement and character to a dull, lifeless media center.

Month IV

The writer contacted teachers by phone and in person to discuss and plan curriculum enrichment materials. As a result of this action, teachers were willing to give input and plans were made for the upcoming school year.

The writer completed the audio-visual guide and had it ready to distribute to teachers when they arrived from summer vacation in August.

Students returned to school by the fourth month so the books on wheels project was discontinued as students could report to the media center to check out books. The summer reading program was discontinued when students reported back to school.

The writer continued to decorate and give the media center a new and attractive face lift. The media center was transformed into a reading lagoon. The dinosaur balloons and live plants were very appropriate for the setting. Children often made positive comments and verbalized how much they liked their media center.

The writer kept a daily tally of the daily circulation record, the media center's activities log, and the teacher request forms. Students were encouraged to continue to keep a reading record.

Month V

The writer assisted students in compiling a mini book. Some students were just beginning word recognition and sight word reading; therefore, their mini books involved mostly drawing with a few words. The writer

continued to read aloud to the students and encourage parents and teachers to read aloud to the students.

The drop-in held for the teachers generated interest and positive input.

The writer held an inservice in the library to inform teachers of new and exciting materials and services available through the media center during the 1993-1994 school year.

The writer continued to keep a tally of the daily circulation record, media center's activities log, and teacher request forms.

Students continued to read books so they could take the electronic bookshelf test.

Month VI

Students continued to take electronic bookshelf tests. Rewards were given for reading points. A researched reading list was distributed to parents.

Students continued to keep reading logs with the assistance of some parents, the teachers, and the writer. A party was given to the class whose students checked out and read the most books. The students' work was displayed in the media center. Students took special pride in pointing out and discussing their work with peers and teachers.

Month VII

Teachers were requested to fill out a media center usage questionnaire. The surveys were filled out by the teachers and returned to the writer.

Students continued to take electronic bookshelf tests. During the seventh month, students were reading more higher level books and generating more points and earning larger treats. They were elated to participate in reading activities as well as earn prizes as a bonus.

A tape about the media center was prepared. The students eagerly participated in the production of this tape under the intendance of the writer.

Students continued to engage in silent sustained reading.

Month VIII

The writer continued to read aloud to the students. The students' daily logs were reviewed. The older students read aloud to the younger students. Students continued to read and take the electronic bookshelf test.

The tape about the media center was presented to the students and faculty. The faculty requested the tape be played on the school's internal system so all the students could view it.

Reflections were held and students absorbingly shared their reading experiences and gave input as it related to the success of the project. Students in the writer's project were vocal in sharing their experiences. In many instances each child wanted to dominate the conversation.

Teacher request sheets were reviewed and tallied. At first teachers made verbal requests; however, after tactful negotiation, requests for materials were made on the request sheets.

Parents and students answered post questionnaires on TV watching time, and the results were tallied.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

The media center's collection had a wealth of materials which were seldom checked out or used. The media center's facilities are used mostly for fixed library scheduled classes. The media center's facilities were unattractive and uninviting to visit.

Solution strategies involved organizing the media collection and printing an audio-visual handbook so that students, parents, and teachers would know what is available in the media collection and utilize the materials. The media center's facilities were attractively decorated with seasonal displays and books. Sofas and chairs were added to make the media center more comfortable and enticing to visit, browse, and read.

Electronic bookshelf and other reading incentive programs were utilized to stimulate scintillating reading habits.

Parents, teachers, and significant others were encouraged to model a love for reading and read aloud to children daily.

Teacher inservices were held. The writer consulted each teacher to correlate the media center's program with the curriculum. Teachers were avidly encouraged to utilize the media center's services and materials. The results were:

1. A daily circulation record will reveal 40 students out of 70 will check out an average of two books weekly. (see Appendix H)

The results were 44 students out of 70 checked out an average of two books weekly. Students frequently utilized the early morning check out time. Occasionally students came between classes and during recess. Teachers were very cooperative in allowing students flexible time to frequent the media center. Four students dropped out of the project because they transferred from the school. This expected outcome was reached.

2. A monthly log of media center activities will reveal five out of eight teachers will use the media center at least once per month for enrichment activities. (see Appendix H)

A tally of the media center activities revealed six out of eight teachers used the media center at least once per month for enrichment activities. The enrichment activities encompassed bringing students to the media

center to research classroom units, browse at books, participate in special projects, and view audio-visuals. Teachers also utilized the media center to meet special needs and interests. Requests were frequently made for newspapers and professional magazines. The results exceeded the expected outcome.

3. A review of teacher request forms will reveal that four out of eight teachers will request supplementary materials once per month. (see Appendix H)

Four out of eight teachers requested supplementary materials once per month. Teachers requested materials to enrich the curriculum. The school has monthly themes. The principal requested teachers to have the class do special art and craft projects and to do written activities related to the theme. This expected outcome was reached.

4. Forty out of 70 children will respond positively when asked if their parents or designated others ever used media center books to read to them or to listen to them read. (see Appendix H)

Fifty-four students responded positively on the reading interview questions when asked if their parents or designated others ever used media center books to read to them or to listen to them read. Twelve students responded

negatively that their parents never listen to them read or never read to them. When the students were asked to give the reason for the negative response, they said because their parents were busy and did not have time or they were too tired. These results exceeded the expected outcome.

5. Six out of eight teachers will respond positively to interview questions when rating the appearance of the media center. (see Appendix H)

Seven out of eight teachers responded positively to interview questions when rating the appearance of the media center. Three teachers rated the center as meeting expectations and four teachers rated the center as exceeding expectations. This outcome exceeded the expected results.

6. A survey will indicate six out of eight teachers are familiar with the media center's holdings in his/her subject area and other curriculum areas. (see Appendix H)

A survey indicated six out of eight teachers are familiar with the media center's holdings in his/her subject area and other curriculum areas. The inservice, audio-visual guide, and informal conversations helped to meet this expected outcome. The teacher indicating

unfamiliarity with the media center was an itinerant teacher and is not at the school site very often. The teacher who dropped out found employment at another school.

7. An interview with parents will reveal 30 out of 70 students reduced TV watching time from two or more hours to one hour daily and increased reading time to 30 minutes or more daily. (see Appendix H)

The result of the parent interview revealed 37 parents reported students watched TV at least two or more hours per day. Twenty-two parents reported students watched television an average of one hour or less per day. It was also reported 44 students increased reading time to 30 minutes or more daily. This outcome partially fulfilled the expected outcome. The TV watching time was decreased, however, not as much as expected.

Discussion

Students were elated to visit the media center. Teachers were very cooperative and allowed students to come to the media center to check out books. The media center theme for the year is the Reading Lagoon. The lively displays, live flowers, dinosaur balloons, and stuffed animals were enticing and seemed to have a luring

effect and enticement for students to come to the media center to browse and check out books.

Edsall (1984) points out plastered walls of displays are not always the most feasible way to convey a message. Free-standing and three-dimensional objects often add variety and interest.

Students showed competitive inclinations to check books out and read so that they could receive prizes. Some teachers gave students opportunities to read the library books aloud in class. Informal conversation with the teachers informed the writer that the students were expected to read each library book before returning it and checking out another book. The book circulation became a cooperative effort between the teachers and the writer to promote more reading.

The media center has an open door policy. Courteous and friendly service characterizes the media center's atmosphere. During the first two months of the practicum, the writer used coaxing strategies to inveigle teachers to use the media center.

Nickel (1984) stresses an important responsibility of a media specialist is to match library patrons with the right material at the most felicitous time; this tedious task should take precedence over any other devoir.

It was the writer's policy to always attend to the teachers' requests in a punctual and timely manner. The same day the request was made was the goal. This goal was reached 95% of the time. Networking with other media centers was also utilized whenever viable.

Four teachers requested supplementary materials to help with curriculum units and seasonal themes. More than four teachers requested media center materials; however, the procedure was very desultory. The teachers who did not utilize request forms would usually make requests when passing the writer in the hall, during lunch, or at a teachers' meeting. The writer would tactfully ask that the request be made on the request form. The writer attempted to fulfill requests as memory allowed even though teachers did not make a formal request on the request form. The rationale behind this action on the part of the writer was to evidence to teachers the writer's willingness to serve.

The 54 positive responses exceeded the 40 expected responses. A review of the writer's daily log was an attestation that parents and guardians were frequently consulted and encouraged to read to their children and listen to them read. Parents are often the child's first

and best teacher. It is essential that children have positive encounters with the printed word.

Fisher (1987) stresses that it is important for parents to understand and appreciate the child's reading stages. Also, children need to follow the reading process in their own unique way. Story time for the parent and child should be one of acceptance and love.

The strategies the writer employed to countenance parents to read to their children involved telephone calls, informal conversation, formal written letters, and participation in parenting classes sponsored by the school.

The desire to read in order to earn points so incentive prizes could be selected was a motivating force for the students. Among the incentive programs were the electric bookshelf, the TV-15 program, and the Book It program. Students had an opportunity to earn pizzas and other prizes from the television station and the Pizza Hut establishment.

The parents, teachers, and the writer assisted students in keeping daily reading logs. These logs helped to document the classes earning special popcorn parties and other treats.

Students enjoyed participating in the read-a-thon. They were very enthusiastic about the project. Before beginning, the expectations and procedures were discussed. The students were very young, and the attention span was short. After approximately an hour and 15 minutes, they became restless, and the winner was declared.

The summer reading program bridged the gap for students to continue to read during the time school was dismissed for vacation. The books on wheels was an innovative movement for the students. Many students expressed seeing some of their favorites in the books that were circulated.

Teachers and administrators have been very complimentary of the appearance of the media center since the writer became the media specialist. They expressed especially liking the displays and the creative way the writer has used materials to camouflage equipment and other media center holdings. An example of this is several record players, which were not checked out and were once an eyesore, became steps and were used to display seasonal books. These books were geared to students' reading levels and interests.

Teachers reported that the media guide was an asset and an indispensable aid. This guide assisted teachers to

become familiar with the media center's collection. The writer used show and tell via inservice meetings and taking materials to the teachers' classes and saying, "This is what we have available. Would you like to use it?" Often the teachers said yes and expressed appreciation for the writer's services.

Even though students reduced TV watching time a few hours, the expected outcome was not met. The students did not reduce TV watching time from two or more hours to one hour or less daily. Students spent more time reading at least 30 minutes or more. Some of the other activities were sacrificed in lieu of the television watching. Old habits are not easily broken. Canfield (1987) stresses change is a process involving time; it's usually very slow and gradual. Today's children have grown up watching television. The television is often the built-in babysitter, a constant companion, and an ever present entertainer. Parents, students, and the public would have to be re-educated if this society is to witness a decline in television watching.

Recommendations

1. The writer's recommendations to benefit others would be to encourage them to visit and become an avid friend and user of the media center; explore the technical equipment and other media resources and allow these resources to become vehicles to effect change, produce progress, and enhance learning.
2. The writer's recommendation would be to hold more teacher inservices on the effective utilization of an elementary school media center. The writer would also recommend more parenting classes related to the importance of reading and reading to children.

Disseminating Plans

The writer disseminated or plans to disseminate the practicum results in diverse ways.

It was shared with a group of media specialists employed by the writer's school district. The practicum results will be submitted to a media specialist's journal. The writer also plans to present the practicum at the International Reading Association (IRA) conducted in the state. The writer also hopes this practicum will be included in ERIC.

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APPENDIX A

DAILY CIRCULATION RECORD

DAILY CIRCULATION RECORD

Grade	Number of Books Checked Out Fiction	Number of Books Checked Out Non-fiction	Total Books Checked Out
4 year olds Teacher A			
1st Grade Teacher B			
2nd Grade Teacher C			
2nd Grade Teacher D			

APPENDIX B

MONTHLY LOG OF MEDIA CENTER ACTIVITIES

MONTHLY LOG OF MEDIA CENTER ACTIVITIES

Date _____

Enrichment Activities

Teacher	Special Skills Lesson	Browse at Books	View Audio-Visuals	Special Research	Any Other Activity
	Date: Time: Activity:	Date: Time: Activity:	Date: Time: Activity:	Date: Time: Activity:	Date: Time: Activity:
	Date: Time: Activity:	Date: Time: Activity:	Date: Time: Activity:	Date: Time: Activity:	Date: Time: Activity:
	Date: Time: Activity:	Date: Time: Activity:	Date: Time: Activity:	Date: Time: Activity:	Date: Time: Activity:
	Date: Time: Activity:	Date: Time: Activity:	Date: Time: Activity:	Date: Time: Activity:	Date: Time: Activity:
	Date: Time: Activity:	Date: Time: Activity:	Date: Time: Activity:	Date: Time: Activity:	Date: Time: Activity:

Comments: _____

APPENDIX C

TEACHER REQUEST FORMS

TEACHER REQUEST FORMS

Teachers: Please fill out a request form when requesting materials.

Teacher's name _____

Date _____

Subject _____

Title of unit _____

I would like to request the following:

Books _____

Vertical file materials _____

Current periodicals _____

Reference books _____

VHS tapes _____

Film strips _____

Study prints _____

Other _____
(additional information related to the unit)

Date materials are needed _____

Comments _____
_____
_____

****

Media Center Use Only

Teacher _____

1. Materials located and forwarded to teacher _____

2. Materials not located in media center; networking with other school library or public library _____

3. Date materials checked out _____ Returned _____

APPENDIX D

STUDENT'S READING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

STUDENT'S READING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Do your parents ever use media center books to read to you? Yes ____ No ____

2. Do your parents ever listen to you read media center books? Yes ____ No ____

Comment why based on your responses _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX E

TEACHER INTERVIEW

MEDIA CENTER'S APPEARANCE AND ENVIRONMENT

TEACHER INTERVIEW
MEDIA CENTER'S APPEARANCE AND ENVIRONMENT

1. The atmosphere is open, warm and welcoming.
   Exceeds expectations ____ Meets expectations ____
   Does not meet expectations ____
   Comment _____
   _____

2. The media center is neat and clean.
   Exceeds expectations ____ Meets expectations ____
   Does not meet expectations ____
   Comment _____
   _____

3. The media center is attractive within space limitations.
   Exceeds expectations ____ Meets expectations ____
   Does not meet expectations ____
   Comment _____
   _____

4. The displays and bulletin boards are attractive and related to the school theme.
   Exceeds expectations ____ Meets expectations ____
   Does not meet expectations ____
   Comment _____
   _____

5. The furnishings are arranged to accommodate activities.
   Exceeds expectations ____ Meets expectations ____
   Does not meet expectations ____
   Comment _____
   _____

Please comment on each as you rate the statement.

APPENDIX F

TEACHER SURVEY

MEDIA CENTER MATERIALS

TEACHER SURVEY
MEDIA CENTER MATERIALS

Please indicate your familiarity with the media center's collection by marking the appropriate response.

1. Know about the VHS tapes in my subject area.
   Very familiar ____ Familiar ____ Unaware ____

2. Has a well-organized audio-visual guide with contents in my subject area.
   Very familiar ____ Familiar ____ Unaware ____

3. Knowledgeable about books in my subject area.
   Very familiar ____ Familiar ____ Unaware ____

4. Cassette tapes, filmstrips, and other audio-visuals available in my subject area.
   Very familiar ____ Familiar ____ Unaware ____

5. Plan with teacher to integrate media center's resources into my subject area.
   Very familiar ____ Familiar ____ Unaware ____

6. Materials in subject area copyright dates are recent years and of good quality.
   Very familiar ____ Familiar ____ Unaware ____

7. Familiar with media center's circulation procedures.
   Very familiar ____ Familiar ____ Unaware ____

APPENDIX G

PARENT INTERVIEW

STUDENT TV WATCHING TIME

PARENT INTERVIEW
STUDENT TV WATCHING TIME

Name _____

Teacher _____

	Yes	Sometimes	No
1. Did your child choose to read a book during free time at home?			
2. Did your child report that he/she chose to read during free time at school?			
3. Does your child watch TV after school?			
4. Does your child watch TV before school?			
5. Do you assist your child in selecting TV programs?			
6. Has your child increased his/her reading time to 30 minutes or more daily since he/she started the reading program?			
7. Does your child watch TV as long as he/she wants?			
8. Do you plan your child's TV watching time?			

Circle the best choice in the following questions.

9. How much time did your child spend watching TV yesterday?
   a. 1 hour b. 2 hours c. 3 hours
   d. 4 or more hours e. 0 hours f. other _____

10. How much time would your child like to spend watching TV if he/she were allowed?
    a. 1 hour b. 2 hours c. 3 hours
    d. 4 or more hours e. 0 hours f. other _____

APPENDIX H

RESULTS OF OUTCOME SUMMARY CHART

RESULTS OF OUTCOME SUMMARY CHART

1. Outcome -- Circulation Record				
Students in Project	Students Dropped	Students Averaging Two Books Weekly	Students Not Averaging Two Books	Total
70	4	44	22	70
This outcome was met.				

2. Outcome -- Monthly Log of Media Center Activities				
Teachers in Project	Teachers Dropped	Teachers Used Media Center	Teachers Did Not Use Media Center	Total
8	1	6	1	8
This outcome was met.				

3. Outcome -- Teachers Monthly Request Forms			
Teachers Requested Supplementary Materials	Teachers Did Not Request Supplementary Materials	Teachers Dropped	Total
4	3	1	8
This outcome was met.			

4. Outcome -- Reading Interview Questions				
Students in Project	Students Dropped	Positive Reading Response	Negative Reading Response	Total
70	4	54	12	70
This outcome was met.				

5. Outcome -- Teacher Interview Media Center's Appearance				
Teachers in Project	Teachers Dropped	Teachers Giving Positive Response	Teachers Giving Negative Response	Total
8	1	7	0	8
This outcome was met.				

6. Outcome -- Teacher Survey/Media Center Materials				
Teachers in Project	Teachers Dropped	Teachers Familiar with Media Center Material	Teachers Not Familiar with Media Center Material	Total
8	1	6	1	8
This outcome was met.				

7. Outcome -- Parent Interview Student Television Watching Time					
Students in Project	Students Dropped	Students Watched TV 2 or More Hours/Day	Students Watched TV 1 Hour or Less	No Response to Interview	TOTAL
70	4	37	22	7	70
This outcome was not met.					

Students in Project	Students Dropped	Increased Reading Time	Did Not Increase Reading Time	Total
70	4	44	22	70
This outcome was met.				